

Perspective on

CHLORINATED DIBENZODIOXINS

And

DIBENZOFURANS

Chlorinated dibenzodioxins or dibenzofurans have been found as contaminants in fungicides (pentachlorophenol), herbicides (2,4,5-T), polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), and products from processes in which polychlorinated phenols are used (animal fats and tallows). Chloracne in chemical workers also seemed due, to some degree, to chemical processes in which trace chlorinated dioxin levels were present. Marked variation in toxicity seemed to be associated with the number and location of chlorines, with the 2,3,7,8-tetrachlorodioxin being one of the most toxic chemicals known.

Much of the data about these compounds is fragmentary, in obscure sources, or unpublished. A conference sponsored by the NIEHS was organized in order to provide a forum where the current knowledge of these

compounds could be presented and discussed by the government, industry and university community. It hopefully also served as an indicator of where to focus future efforts. The conference was held April 2-3, 1978 at the Governors Inn, Research Triangle Park, North Carolina. Presentations included methods of detection, chemical processes involved in formation, bioaccumulation, and degradation, toxicity, pharmacologic effects, as well as distribution and fate in man's environment.

The papers presented at that meeting appear substantially as presented. The paper by Piper, Rose, and Gehring as well as the Bibliography prepared by Huff were not part of the Conference but are included for completeness of the subject. Your comments on the issue are certainly welcome.

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Conference Chairman